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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

ISS 27 178
Issue #77
February 13, 1978

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OFFICE OF OPERATIONS AND FINANCE.....The newly established Office of Operations and Finance (O&F) is now operating and the organization chart is shown on page 4. The most significant changes that will provide the strongest and most effective Departmental leadership are:

1. The consolidation of Departmental administration at the New Orleans Computer Center and the National Finance Center to provide streamlined management over the resources needed to develop and maintain the Central Accounting System and related administrative data bases for USDA.
2. The combination of policy and operational staffs for real and personal property, and procurement to provide better resource utilization and focus on improvements in these areas.
3. The establishment of a forward-looking Information Systems Division that combines Departmental efforts in the areas of word processing, data base development, and paperwork management.
4. Focusing in a single unit the responsibilities for the development of effective internal USDA agency conservation measures.
5. Strengthening financial policy development through the establishment of a Deputy Director, Finance at the headquarters.
6. The consolidation of USDA grants management to more effectively administer these activities.

JEROME A. MILES LEAVING USDA.....Jerry Miles, Acting Director of the Office of Budget, Planning and Evaluation is leaving USDA on February 16 to become Controller of the Department of Energy. Jerry came to the Department in 1955 as a management intern, went to Commerce in 1966 and returned to Agriculture in 1967 to become Deputy Director of the Office of Budget and Finance. He was named Director of that office in 1972. He was subsequently named Director of the Office of Management and Finance and Acting Director of its successor, OBP&E.

USDA MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE.....The Management Council identified several areas of common interest and concern at the Fredericksburg Conference. Task forces were established to explore the areas of concern, define the opportunities or problems and develop potential solutions or courses of action.

The following task forces were established:

- ...Image of Department, Jack Carson, Chairman
- ...Making EEO Work, Jack Sprague, Chairman
- ...Centralization vs. Decentralization, Irv Thomas, Chairman
- ...Employees, Tom McDonald, Chairman
- ...Communication/Participation/New Technology/Information Needs, Gail Sedgwick, Chairman
- ...Safety-Agency/Department/OSHA, Milton Ray, Chairman
- ...Facilities-Quality/Colocation Policy, Ed Alvarez, Chairman

Initial task force reports will be submitted by March 15 to the Forum Chairman, Verne Bathurst. (Contact: Verne Bathurst, SCS, ext. 76297)

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS.....A Cooperative Education Program for Graduate Students was established by Executive Order 12015 on October 26, 1977. This program provides for periods of study-related, fully paid employment for graduate students majoring in the general fields of management and administration, engineering, accounting and the physical and life sciences. Upon completion of the requirements for an advanced degree and work assignments, students may be converted to career or career-conditional appointments. This program and the program for baccalaureate students are excellent vehicles for expanding employment opportunities in the professional and technical fields to qualified minorities, women and physically handicapped individuals. Both programs should be used to obtain high quality personnel to meet current and future needs. FPM Letter 308-9 and Personnel Letter 308-3 provide instructions and guidelines for implementation of the program. (Contact: Patricia J. Killen, OP, ext. 72435)

CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON THE 1979 BUDGET.....Hearings on the 1979 Budget request for USDA will be held from February 14 to March 17, in the House and from February 24 to April 11, in the Senate. Agency Administrators will be the principal witness at each of the hearings. (Contact: Bobby L. Barham, OBPE, ext. 76176)

FNS REORGANIZATION.....FNS is implementing the new organization and active recruitment is underway to fill key positions. The following Acting Deputy Administrator appointments have been made:

- ...Special Nutrition Programs - Gene Dickey
- ...Family Feeding Programs - Nancy Snyder
- ...Regional Operations - Dave Alspach
- ...Administrative Management - Frank Gearde

A financial management transition team headed by Budget Director George Hall is developing plans for shifting functions and staff to the Comptroller's Office. Administrator Straus will fill key positions on a permanent basis by mid-spring. (Contact: Orval G. Kerchner, FNS, ext. 78031)

CONSUMER REPRESENTATION.....On February 8, the House of Representatives voted down legislation which would have established an Agency for Consumer Representation (H. R. 6805). The 189 to 227 vote effectively killed the measure's changes of success for the balance of the 95th Congress. (Contact: Al Duran, OBPE, ext. 74654)

FEDERAL GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.....On February 3, President Carter signed into law P. L. 95-224, a measure to distinguish Federal grant and cooperative agreement relationships from Federal procurement relationships. The bill establishes criteria for the selection of appropriate legal instruments such as contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. In addition, it requires a feasibility study of a comprehensive system of guidance for carrying out Federal assistance programs, and also authorizes the OMB to issue guidelines to promote consistent and efficient use of contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. (Contact: Al Duran, OBPE, ext. 74654)

SPECIAL EXAMINING UNIT IN SCS.....The Soil Conservation Service has been delegated authority by the Civil Service Commission to accept and rate applications for Soil Conservation, Soil Science and Range Conservation options at the GS-5/7 level under CSC Announcement 421. The Special Examining Unit in SCS which handles this activity is the largest such unit outside the Civil Service Commission. Registers are being established for the three options and eligible candidates will be certified to all government agencies. It is expected that approximately ten thousand applications will be processed in the unit this year. (Contact: William A. Centopani, SCS, ext. 74169)

NEW COMPUTER FOR KCCC.....Through competitive procurement procedures, a contract was awarded on January 31 to Honeywell Information Systems, Inc., for installation before June 1, 1978, of a Series 60/Level 66 computer with Gcos Operating system at the Kansas City Computer Center to replace eight currently installed computers. The contract price was discounted more than 60% below the cost for the same equipment under the "GSA Schedule." This system, coupled with the collocation of the SLCC and KCCC at Kansas City, will result in an estimated savings of more than \$12 million over the six year systems life. (Contact: Ray Long, O&F, ext. 76275)

DPA FOR FCCC.....A Delegation of Procurement Authority was granted by GSA to USDA on January 27 to competitively procure a computer to replace the UNIVAC 1100/42 at the Fort Collins Computer Center. Request for Proposals will be sent to vendors about March 15. (Contact: Ray Long, O&F, ext. 76275)

NEW COMPUTER FOR NOCC.....Award of a contract for a competitively procured computer for the New Orleans Computer Center will be made about March 3 for installation by June 15, 1978. This computer will replace the six computers in NOCC. (Contact: Ray Long, O&F, ext. 76275)

WCC MOVE TO ROSSLYN.....The Washington Computer Center will move to Rosslyn Virginia within the next six months. A User Services area will be set up in the South Building which will interconnect terminals to WCC. (Contact: Ray Long, O&F, ext. 76275)

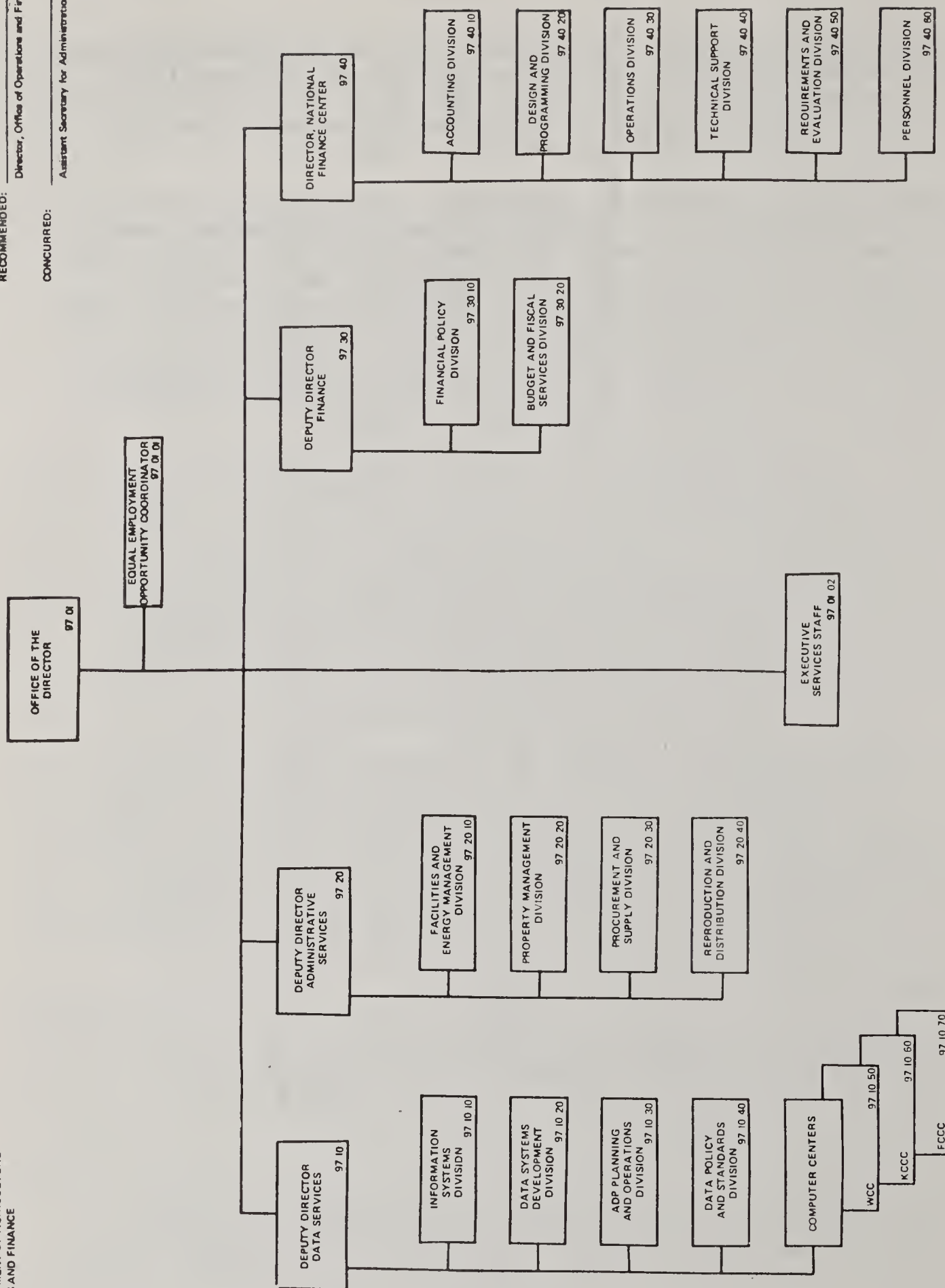
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF OPERATIONS AND FINANCE

RECOMMENDED:

Director, Office of Operations and Finance

CONCURRED:

Assistant Secretary for Administration



The mission of the Office of Operations and Finance is to develop and administer: (1) all automated systems, including Departmental wide systems; (2) financial policy and fiscal accounting and payroll functions; (3) policies and procedures with regard to procurement, grants, and agreements, property and facilities; transportation and supply management; and (4) perform consolidated administrative and support activities within the Department.